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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/720,656	11/24/2003	George Frey	88730-400300	4638
27717	7590	02/17/2009	EXAMINER	
SEYFARTH SHAW LLP			SCHILLINGER, ANN M	
131 S. DEARBORN ST., SUITE 2400				
CHICAGO, IL 60603-5803			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3774	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			02/17/2009	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/720,656	FREY ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	ANN SCHILLINGER	3774	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 July 2008.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-45,47,48 and 57-64 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 17-40, 57-64 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-16 and 41-45,47-48 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

Claim 29 is objected to because of the following informalities: misspelling of the word "advance" in line 3. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim 41 is objected to because of the following informalities: misspelling of the word "moveable" in line 7. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 41-45,47-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Claim 41 recites the limitation "said at least one place" in lines 8-9. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-13, 15, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Gauthier (US Pat. No. 3,695,890). Gauthier discloses the following of the claimed invention: a surgical instrumentation system comprising: a frame (F) with a recess (please see Figures 1a and 15); retractors (A, B) with clamping devices (11) having a foot (see in Figure 15, the portion extending into the frame) and a receptacle between a pair of arms (left and right sides of element

11); and distractors (A', B') with an anchor extension (B3), anchors (49), and a retractor portion (B1) with a receptacle (18), arms (left and right sides of element 15), and a socket portion (16).

The frame also has an oval shape.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gauthier in view of Koros et al. (US Pat. No. 5,944,658). Gauthier discloses the invention substantially as claimed, however, Gauthier does not teach the anchor of the retractor portion being a multi-axial screw. Koros et al. teaches a spinal instrumentation system with the anchor of the retractor portion of the distractor mechanism being a multi-axial screw in col. 2, lines 54-65 for the purpose of better securing the anchor to the retractor portion. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the anchor of Gauthier to be a multi-axial screw in order to better secure the anchor to the retractor portion.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 17-40 and 57-64 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-16 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ANN SCHILLINGER whose telephone number is (571)272-6652. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. thru Fri. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Isabella can be reached on (571) 272-4749. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/A. S./
Examiner, Art Unit 3774
/William H. Matthews/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3774